



# Washington State Department of Agriculture

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## **Advice, connections for ag and food businesses at free export seminars** *State to bring buyers in from China, Japan, Korea and Mexico*

**OLYMPIA** – Washington food and agricultural businesses not already exporting may be missing the boat—as well as the potential for reaching lucrative export markets in Asia and Mexico where consumers are hungry for agricultural products grown, raised or processed in the Evergreen State.

A good business plan, market research and the right introductions can change that. The [Washington State Department of Agriculture](#) (WSDA) is sponsoring a series of 90-minute market advising clinics in April, featuring one-on-one consulting with a WSDA representative from Japan, Korea, China or Mexico to help small ag businesses export their products for the first time or consider expanding their foreign markets to new countries.

These Market Advising Clinics will be held at:

- Tri-Cities – April 15
- Yakima – April 16
- Seattle – April 17 and 18

Based on the information exchanged in the consulting session, WSDA will then work to organize meetings between foreign buyers and small ag businesses here in Washington. In September, these foreign buyers will then visit participating Washington firms, sample their products and explore new business partnerships.

All of this is funded by a federal grant from the [State Trade and Export Promotion \(STEP\) program](#) developed by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). WSDA's [International Marketing Program](#) is working in close coordination with the Washington State Department of Commerce to implement the grant.

To register for these export seminars, contact Julie Johnson at [jjohnson@agr.wa.gov](mailto:jjohnson@agr.wa.gov) or (360) 902-1940.

Food exports continue to grow dramatically, with a record \$8.6 billion in sales of Washington-origin food and agricultural products reaching foreign markets in 2011. And in 2012, WSDA export trade specialists assisted more than 200 firms make international sales totaling \$120 million, up from \$94 million in WSDA-assisted sales in 2011.

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